

REMARKS

The Official Action dated June 2, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled in their entirety without prejudice nor disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein and claims 3, 5 and 9 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, claims 3-18 are presently pending in the instant application with claims 11-18 being withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Initially, Applicant wishes to acknowledge the Examiner's indication at page 4 of the Official Action that claims 7 and 8 are allowable over the prior art of record.

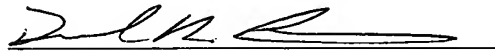
With reference to page 2 of the Office Action, claims 3-6, 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner is of the position that the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Examiner is of the position that the specification does not provide support for explicitly excluding the use of O₂. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, each of claims 3, 5 and 9 have been amended to replace "O₂ gas" with "component which oxidizes the organic component" which is supported by Applicant's specification at page 9, lines 20-21 with respect to claim 3, page 10, lines 22-23 with respect to claim 5 and page 13, lines 1-2 for claim 9. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3-6, 9 and 10 are now in proper formal condition for allowance.

With reference now to page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,207,583 issued to Dunne et al. in view of Japanese Patent Publication 10-268526 issued to Sato. As can be seen from the foregoing amendments, claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled and consequently further discussion with the respect to the merits of this rejection is no longer believed to be warranted.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 3-10 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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